

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

MAY 11, 2005

MEMBERS

PRESENT: Rick Cleary (arr. 7:10 p.m.), Laura Sherman, Eric Santini, Anna Sanko and Tim Olmsted

ABSENT: John Luginbuhl

ALSO

PRESENT: Peter Charter, BOS Liaison, Matt Davis, Town Planner and Reanna Goodreau, Recording Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chairman Sherman called the Economic Development Commission meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION WENT OUT OF AGENDA ORDER TO ADDRESS ITEM 4 OF UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

4. Tax Abatement Policies/Procedures—Update

Peter Charter inquired if the abatement program was based on the actual cost or assessed value. Chairman Cleary stated that it is the actual cost, as required by the Connecticut General Statutes. Mr. Charter also asked if the commission would request an opinion from the Town Attorney as to the definition of cost and if in-kind services could be counted as part of the actual cost. He gave the example of someone acting as their own general contractor then applying those "labor costs" to the overall project costs as to the abatement requirements. The EDC was not sure if that was possible, and felt that if it was, there should be some way to document the "costs" attributed to those "in-kind services," and that the town should have the right to determine what would be acceptable documentation. The EDC also agreed that although the affidavit provided by Mr. Matzack (according to Mr. Charter) refers to assessed values and not to "cost," that generally a sworn affidavit was an acceptable first step to evaluate compliance with the terms of an abatement, as opposed to using construction cost estimates provided by an applicant for a building permit as the basis for calculating building permit fees. If there were questions about an affidavit, additional documentation could be requested. For clarification, Mr.

Davis asked if Mr. Charter's inquiry was general or specific to a particular abatement. Mr. Charter and the EDC felt it was both general and specific. The commission agreed to request an opinion from the Town Attorney.

The EDC then reviewed the draft changes to the procedures that had been prepared by Ms. Goodreau, based upon EDC input, as well as input from the Assessor. Mr. Davis felt that the subcommittee was probably subject to, and should follow, FOIA requirements. He also suggested that specific and consistent requirements be put into each (future) agreement regarding compliance provisions, such as the annual compliance check. The EDC indicated that they would perform that function and Mr. Davis suggested that they coordinate with the Assessor to set a standard date, such as June 1, to perform these evaluations. Ms. Goodreau will complete these edits and then distribute the draft to the Town Attorney and others for review and comment. The final product would be sent to the BOS for formal action/adoption.

THE COMMISSION RETURNED TO ORIGINAL AGENDA ORDER.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Request from WPCA for Economic Development Commission's Input re: Economic Development (Letter from Pam Lombardo dated 4/14/05)

Reanna Goodreau handed out an e-mail dated 5/3/05 that Matt Davis had sent to Pam Lombardo in regards to the above. Mr. Davis explained that the WPCA is formalizing a policy for the additional 200,000 gallons of sewer capacity. The commission reviewed and discussed the e-mail and the letter from Mrs. Lombardo. The commission agreed that they did not have enough information to answer some of the questions posed. They also noted that they are currently reviewing the Plan of Conservation and Development in order to update economic development policies, goals and strategies.

MOVED (OLMSTED), SECONDED (SANTINI) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO REQUEST STAFF SEND A MEMO TO THE WPCA RESPONDING TO THE QUESTIONS POSED BY THE WPCA TO THE EDC.

QUESTION 1: DEFINE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT—THE EDC IS CURRENTLY REVIEWING THE EXISTING PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT IN ORDER TO UPDATE THE SECTIONS THAT APPLY TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

QUESTION 2: SHOULD TRANSFER OF CAPACITY BE ALLOWED?—YES.

QUESTION 3: SHOULD THE DEFINITION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCLUDE AGE-RESTRICTED HOUSING?—YES.

QUESTION 4: SHOULD CAPACITY BE RESERVED FOR FUTURE HEALTH/RECREATIONAL FACILITIES? UNDETERMINED AT THIS TIME. (SEE ANSWER TO QUESTION 1)

QUESTION 5: SHOULD CAPACITY BE RESERVED FOR NEW TOWN FACILITIES OR SCHOOLS? YES.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. CEDAS: Camera Friendly Communities—Update

Commissioner Sanko stated that she spoke with the film division and they want towns to submit their pictures digitally. She noted that Commissioner Sherman created a list of services that Ellington could offer a crew that would be filming in town. Mr. Davis suggested informing the Cultural Arts Commission of this initiative and perhaps working with that commission on the project. Commissioner Sanko suggested having postcards at the library so the public is aware of this project, but Chairman Cleary suggested instead including information about it in the town's newsletter and on the town's website. Commissioner Olmsted suggested that the EDC request that interested citizens send digital pictures of their properties for inclusion in the Camera Friendly Communities database.

2. Farm Initiatives—Update

Matt Davis noted that the Farmer's Market is opening on June 25, 2005. Commissioner Sherman stated that the First Selectman is having a meeting with the participating farmers in order to create one point of contact. The farmers will have to show their insurance in order to be able to participate. Commissioner Sherman stated that the market will be on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. until October 9, 2005 and that 10-12 farmers have noted interest. There has also been some concern noted by "competitors" such as the Dzen Market.

3. Business Survey—Update

Matt Davis reviewed his memo dated April 26, 2005. He stated that there are many types of businesses on the list, including farms and home occupations, and if the effort was to be successful, we needed to focus. He felt we needed to clearly define our reasons for including some and excluding others. Reanna Goodreau explained that she was having difficulty narrowing the list because list was based on personal property. Chairman Cleary stated that he wants to get the survey out as soon as possible and that he will review the list of businesses to determine which businesses should be included.

5. Status of Development Fees—Update

Matt Davis stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission has not made changes to the fees. He stated that the BOS has the authority to modify the fees, but that they deferred to the PZC.

6. Review of the Economic Development Chapter of the Current Plan of Conservation & Development & Zoning Regulations

Chairman Cleary stated that the budget request includes \$80,000 for the Plan of Conservation and Development update. Matt Davis stated that he has received the scope from Planimetrics and will forward it to the EDC for their June meeting.

Mr. Davis suggested that when reviewing the current Plan of Conservation and Development, they should be looking at it generally. For example, they should look at the different areas that are currently zoned commercially and industrially and see if the current plan and the current

regulations are sufficient for what they'd like to see occur at those areas. Commissioner Olmsted suggested looking at the possibility of the town purchasing the Ellington Airport. Chairman Cleary suggested discussing target areas to see how they are currently zoned, what current land uses are located on these parcels, what infrastructure is available, etc. These areas would include the Airport, Route 83, Windermere Avenue, the Northwest Corner, Crystal Lake, and the Village Center. That approach is consistent with the recommendations of the Build Out Analysis.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Budget Update—Status

Chairman Cleary noted that the referendum for the budget is on May 18, 2005. He also noted that some EDC funds were cut from their budget.

2. Approval of the April 13, 2005 Meeting Minutes

MOVED (SHERMAN), SECONDED (SANTINI) AND PASSED (ABSTAINED: SANKO) TO APPROVE THE APRIL 13, 2005 MEETING MINUTES.

3. Correspondence:

- a. Letter from MetroHartford Alliance, dated 4/4/05
- b. Letter to Matt Davis from Attorney Boyan, dated 4/20/05 (Legal Opinion re: Age Restricted Developments)
- c. Memo to PZC from Matt Davis, dated 4/25/05 (Planimetrics Draft Proposal)

SO NOTED.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED (SHERMAN), SECONDED (SANKO) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Reanna Goodreau
Recording Secretary